

Measuring and Assessing Environmental Quality in the Lower Mainland Region of British Columbia

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The British Columbia Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection measures ecosystem variables to protect the environment and human health by ensuring clean and safe water, land and air.

The Ministry's responsibility is to set standards, measure attainment of those standards, develop new tools for characterizing the ecosystem and communicate on the state of surface water, groundwater and air quality.

Specific activities includes :

- Measuring bacterial indicator parameters in streams for produce irrigation, and in sensitive marine areas for recreation and mariculture uses.
- Determining the appropriate sediment criteria for bioaccumulative substances to protect higher trophic level biota such as birds and marine mammals.
- Automated monitoring of surface streams in agricultural and urban areas to determine the implications of land use on event-driven surface water quality and to develop mitigation/prevention measures.
- Supporting locally driven Water Management Plans for groundwater supply and drinking quality protection.
- Monitoring air contaminants to support air quality management planning activities that target emission reduction measures to meet planning goals.
- Contributing to national, provincial and regional water quality trend reporting, in order to educate and communicate to target audiences.

These activities allow the Ministry to contribute towards science-based decisions, which lead to effective management of environmental quality and are linked with other Ministry initiatives such as regulation audits, compliance and enforcement actions.

For more information: <http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/srv/p2/eq/index.htm>